

REMARKS

In response to the Office Action mailed November 30, 2006, the Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration. To further the prosecution of this Application, Applicant submits the following remarks, have cancelled claims, and have added new claims. The claims as now presented are believed to be in allowable condition.

Claims 1-33 were pending in this Application. Claims 1, 6-13, 18-24, and 28-33 were considered and claims 2-5, 14-17, and 25-27 were withdrawn from consideration. Claims 1, 6-8, 11-13, 18-20, and 23-33 were rejected and claims 9-10, 21-22, and 30-31 were objected to. By this Amendment, claims 2-6, 10, 14-18, 22, 25-27, 29, and 31 have been cancelled. Claim 1 has been amended to include the content of cancelled dependent claims 6 and 10, claim 13 has been amended to include the content of cancelled dependent claims 18 and 22, and claim 28 has been amended to include the content of cancelled claims 29 and 31. Claims 34-36 have been added. Accordingly, claims 1, 7-9, 11-13, 19-21, 23, 24, 28, 30, and 32-36 are now pending in this Application. Claims 1, 13, 28, and 34-36 are independent claims. Amendment and cancellation of the claims should in no way be construed as an acquiescence to any of the rejections presented in the Office Action and was done solely to expedite prosecution of the Application.

Preliminary Matters

The Office Action Summary indicates in the "Disposition of Claims" section that claims 1-33 is/are pending in the application (item 4) and that claims 1, 6-8, 11-13, 18-20, and 23-34 is/are rejected (item 6). The Applicants believe such a listing is in error. Item 6 should list claims 1, 6-8, 11-13, 18-20, and 23-**33** as being rejected.

Additionally, the Office Action has not indicated the status of the formal figures filed with the Patent Office on January 13, 2004, whether accepted or objected. The Applicants respectfully request clarification regarding the status of the figures in this Application.

Allowed Claims

Claims 9-10, 21-22, and 30-31 were objected to as being dependent on a rejected base claim but were deemed allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Claim 9 has been rewritten in independent form as new claim 34 to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Accordingly, claim 34 is now in allowable condition. Claim 10 has been rewritten in independent form (e.g., claim 1 as amended) to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Accordingly, claim 1 is now in allowable condition. Furthermore, because claims 7-9, 11, 12, and 32 depend from allowable independent claim 1, claims 7-9, 11, 12, and 32 are in allowable condition.

Claim 21 has been rewritten in independent form as new claim 35 to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Accordingly, claim 35 is now in allowable condition. Claim 22 has been rewritten in independent form (e.g., claim 13 as amended) to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Accordingly, claim 13 is now in allowable condition. Furthermore, because claims 19-21, 23, 24, and 33 depend from allowable independent claim 13, claims 19-21, 23, 24, and 33 are in allowable condition.

Claim 30 has been rewritten in independent form as new claim 36 to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

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Accordingly, claim 36 is now in allowable condition. Claim 31 has been rewritten in independent form (e.g., claim 28 as amended) to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Accordingly, claim 28 is now in allowable condition. Furthermore, because claims 30 depends from allowable independent claim 28, claim 30 is in allowable condition.

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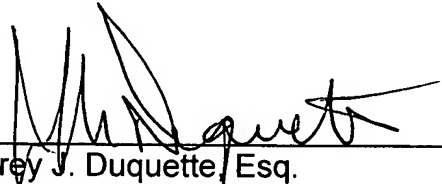
Conclusion

In view of the foregoing remarks, this Application should be in condition for allowance. A Notice to this affect is respectfully requested. If the Examiner believes, after this Response, that the Application is not in condition for allowance, the Examiner is respectfully requested to call the Applicant's Representative at the number below.

The Applicant hereby petitions for any extension of time which is required to maintain the pendency of this case. If there is a fee occasioned by this response, including an extension fee, that is not covered by an enclosed check, please charge any deficiency to Deposit Account No. 50-3661.

If the enclosed papers or fees are considered incomplete, the Patent Office is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned collect at (508) 616-2900, in Westborough, Massachusetts.

Respectfully submitted,



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